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FM AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0903
INFO CIS COLLECTIVE
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RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 0221

C O N F I D E N T I A L TASHKENT 000769

SIPDIS
DRL FOR RACHEL WALDSTEIN
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PASS TO AMCONSUL ST PETERSBURG
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PASS TO AMCONSUL VLADIVOSTOK
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PASS TO AMCONSUL YEKATERINBURG
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PASS TO AMEMBASSY PODGORICA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS PASS TO AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019/05/14

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [UZ](#)

SUBJECT: UZBEKISTAN: ANDIJON COMMEMORATION BROKEN UP IN TASHKENT

CLASSIFIED BY: Timothy P. Buckley, Second Secretary, Department of State, Political and Economic Section; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

11. (C) On May 13, a small group of human rights activists attempted to commemorate the fourth anniversary of the tragic events in Andijon by laying a wreath at the monument of courage in central Tashkent, according to the independent website Uznews.net. Poloff spoke with Dilorom Ishakova on May 14, who confirmed that this was an accurate report and that she was one of the group of about 20 who intended to conduct the modest ceremony at the Soviet-era monument dedicated in the aftermath of the 1966 Tashkent earthquake. Ishakova conceded she was not surprised that "a group of police officers was waiting for such a provocation" and did not let them access the site.

12. (C) Ishakova noted that really only about 12 people made it to the gathering point at a small store from where they set off because several activists were rounded up in their homes early in the morning to prevent any protests. This included Yelena Urdayeva, whose detention was the subject of a separate article on May 13 on Uznews.net. Ishakova said other activists who were rounded up included Anatoliy Volkov, Tatiana Davlatova, Surat Ikramov (along with his wife), and Oleg Sarapulov. Poloff inquired as to their current status, and Ishakova made some phone calls and reported back that all had been released from police detention centers by the evening of May 13, and at least some paid fines. Ishakova herself was not detained, as her group dispersed when instructed by authorities and had fully expected to have their path blocked. Conveniently, authorities had arranged for the monument to be undergoing renovations on May 13, and even admonished one participant not to take photos (ordinarily the site is a popular spot for wedding pictures).

13. (C) Ishakova reported that one activist, Ilnur Abdulov from the Human Rights Alliance of Uzbekistan, did reach the monument. This was also reported in the Uznews.net article, which said he unveiled a placard reading "We remember Andijon Events!" and which prompted authorities to whisk him away in a car. Ishakova told poloff he received "a strong beating" at the Yunusobod Prosecutor's Office and was held until 9 PM on the evening of May 13 before also being released.

14. (C) In an unrelated note, Ishakova had little new information

about imprisoned activist Akzam Turgunov in Karakalpakstan, whose case she follows closely. She spoke with his wife on May 12, who reported receiving a "very short letter" from Turgunov that did not convey much. She intends to visit him next week.

Comment:

15. (C) Several articles appeared in the international press about the Andijon event and commemoration events took place abroad, but there was little this group of activists could do to mark the occasion in Tashkent other than this symbolic effort. Ishakova's account corroborates the Uznews.net version of events, although the heavy beating of the lone activist to reach the monument and unveil a placard has not been verified. Authorities are well aware of this group of activists and, although it is lamentable that they were denied the chance to peacefully express their views, it is fortunate that officials did not incarcerate any beyond the Andijon anniversary.
NORLAND